



SYNERGY IN DEVELOPMENT 2007

*A Decade of Higher Education Collaboration
in Development*



APPENDIX D: END-OF-WORKSHOP EVALUATIVE SURVEY

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Participants were asked to assess the Workshop using a standardized form. The questions included two open-ended queries about how impact from higher education partnerships can be enhanced, and what should be done to reduce the constraints to higher education partnership impacts. Short-answer questions addressed the overall effectiveness of the workshop sessions. 115 (36%) of the participants complied with the request for detailed feedback about the value and substance of the Workshop. The vast majority (87%) were academic faculty and staff either from the U.S. or HCN institutions since the assessment questions were directed to partnership managers and implementers. The respondents represented partnerships that:

- were completed and closed-out,
- were currently active but nearly completed, and
- had just-begun activities.

The questions focused primarily on how to enhance the impact of future partnerships, and how to reduce constraints to impact (see illustration 2. for detailed responses to each of these two questions.) More specifically, questions were asked about how the workshop sessions focused on the contributions of higher education to capacity building, and to the scalability, replicability, and sustainability of development impact.

Responses to Open Ended Questions about Impact of Partnerships

Participants at the USAID/HED 2007 Synergy Workshop provided diverse input and guidance regarding ways to enhance the impact, sustainability, scalability and replicability of higher education partnerships. The input targeted three primary audiences: higher education institutions interested in pursuing partnership programs, HED, and USAID. That input is summarized below.

I. Guidance and Input for Higher Education Institutions

Participants offered a number of recommendations regarding the design, planning and development of higher education partnerships. Those recommendations included the following:

- A. Develop a Sustainability Plan
- B. Diversify Funding Sources and Engage in Proactive Financial Planning
- C. Diversify and Expand the Range of Partners Involved - Assess and Identify Stakeholders, Core Partners and Core Beneficiaries
- D. Determine Project Goals and Objectives in Collaboration with Host-Country Stakeholders and Ensure Stakeholder Involvement in Implementation
- E. Define a Clear and Focused Problem to Address Based on Stakeholder Needs
- F. Be Realistic
- G. Clarify Financial Roles, Processes and Capacity in Advance – Plan Accordingly
- H. Develop Specific and Measurable Performance Objectives and Performance Monitoring Plans
- I. Plan for Adaptation: Incorporate Ability to Adjust
- J. Plan and Implement for Institutionalization and Expansion
- K. Plan How to Leverage International Academic Networks and Support
- L. Build Productive Project Relationships within the Partnership

II. Guidance and Input for Higher Education for Development (HED)

Participants offered a number of recommendations regarding ways in which HED could help enhance the design, impact, sustainability, scalability and replicability of higher education partnerships. In some cases, HED’s ability to implement certain recommendations will be a function of decisions by Congress and/or USAID. However, many of the suggestions would seem to be within HED’s manageable interest, assuming sufficient resources and funding are provided by USAID, ACE, and/or the major higher education associations.

A. Apply Appropriate Application Selection and Evaluation Criteria

A significant number of comments noted the importance of requiring applications to include a detailed “sustainability plan” that would be evaluated as part of the recommendation process.

B. Assist with Partnership Formation and Funding

There were numerous comments regarding HED’s potential as a broker of relationships, information, and funding. (See also Item C below)

C. Develop, Distribute and Provide Guidance: Lessons Learned and Best Practices

- D. Use Reports Strategically
- E. Increase Visibility of partnership Projects and Results (Publicity, Media, Communications)
- F. Facilitate Networking and Collaboration – Online Approaches Key
- G. Build on Existing and Prior Program Investments
- H. Expand Funding Resources and Diversify Funding Approaches – Initial and Follow-On
- I. Increase Partnership Duration
- J. Provide Sufficient Time for Development of Applications
- K. Broaden the Types of Programs Offered
- L. Consider a Focus on Selected Issues and Activities
- M. Help HEIs Be Aware of Opportunities
- N. Provide Technical Review and Assistance – Initially and Mid-Term

III. Guidance and Input for USAID

Participants provided explicit and implicit guidance to USAID, including the recommendation that USAID support HED in its efforts to implement the recommendations noted above. Therefore, the guidance to USAID is organized by the same rubric used for the guidance to HED. This is meant to highlight the opportunity for USAID, as possible and appropriate, to support the efforts of HED to respond to the recommendations and input provided by the participants at the workshop.

A. Apply Appropriate Application Selection and Evaluation Criteria

A significant number of comments noted the importance of requiring applications to include a detailed “sustainability plan” that would be evaluated as part of the selection process.

B. Assist with Partnership Formation and Funding

There were numerous comments regarding USAID’s potential as a broker of relationships, information, and funding.

C. Develop, Distribute and Provide Guidance: Lessons Learned and Best Practices

There were numerous comments regarding the need for the development and distribution of lessons learned and best practices.

- D. Use Reporting Strategically
- E. Publicity: Increase Visibility of Projects and Results
- F. Facilitate Networking and Collaboration – Online Approaches Key
- G. Build on Program Investments
- H. Expand Funding Resources and Diversify Funding Approaches – Initial and Follow-On
- I. Increase Partnership Duration
- J. Provide Sufficient Time for Application Development
- K. Broaden the Types of Programs Offered
- L. Consider a Focus on Selected Issues and Activities
- M. Help Higher Education Institutions Be Aware of Opportunities
- N. Help Higher Education Institutions and HED Develop Stakeholder Relationships
- O. Provide Support to Project Implementation

IV. Summary

Based on the recommendations provided by the participants, there are numerous opportunities for USAID, HED and the higher education community to build on the successes that were showcased at the Synergy Workshop. Indeed, there was extensive interest in and demand for products that would convey the lessons learned and best practices provided by those successes. If higher education institutions follow the recommendations provided by the participants, and if USAID and HED can work together to support those efforts per the recommendations outlined above, there is a strong likelihood that future partnerships will exhibit even greater levels of impact.
